

**Educational Research Centre
MEETING OF THE BOARD
4 December 2019**

A meeting of the Board of the Educational Research Centre (ERC) was held on 4 December 2020 at the offices of the organisation.

Board Members Present:

Pauric Travers (PT), Chairperson; Denise Burns (DB), Deputy Chairperson; Michael Martin (MM) (Via Skype Link); Edward Murtagh (EM)

In Attendance:

Jude Cosgrove (JC), Anne Comey (AC) who took the minutes

Absent: N/A

Counsel Present: N/A

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3.30 pm.

The Agenda was adopted (Appendix I). Item 9 was dealt with after item 10 for logistical reasons.

1. Minutes BMin (Bmin-0919)

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and will be signed pending correction of a typo.

The Board congratulated the ERC on the launch of the PISA 2018 national report and asked JC and AC to pass on their congratulations to all involved especially Gerry Shiel, Caroline McKeown and Sylvia Denner.

2. Matters arising from previous minutes

The Board agreed that, minuting items under reports on developments since the previous meeting would be kept at high level going forward.

The CEO provided the Board with an update on the Test Department building ownership issues following discussions with ERC's solicitor. Discussions followed on the broader matter of the ERC's lease and SLA with DCU.

3. Report on developments since previous meeting

(See Appendix II).

Correspondence from Dr Eivers issued to the Chairperson was discussed by the Board. The Board agreed that the matter is now closed.

4. Governance matters (B-5-19-1)

JC and AC attended a governance meeting with CPU on 5 November 2019 (copies of the minutes of same were issued to the Board).

The Board was updated on the ongoing pension issues:

- (i) Pension Statements were issued to employees in October 2019 for Single Scheme members. Pension statements for College of Education members cannot be issued until DCU has confirmed transfer data.
- (ii) The ERC continues to liaise with the Pensions Authority on progress towards compliance.
- (iii) Correspondence issued by DCU was received by the ERC in November in relation to the risks for payment of pensions for ERC retired employees posed by the absence of any formal agreement between DCU and ERC. The Board agreed with the ARC's recommendation that solution needed to be sought through CPU. The ERC has been in communication with CPU on this, and an email from CPU is expected later in December on the matter of pensions and other outstanding items.
- (iv) ERC issued a gap analysis of the Code of Practice (COP) 2016 to CPU on 20 November 2019.

5. Finance

JC and AC held discussion with CPU in relation to surplus and reserves and expected expenditure at year end (I&E Q4), and a proposal for these has been agreed. CPU is to revert back to ERC on reserves for 2020.

The Comptroller and Auditor General presented its findings for 2018 to the ARC on 4 December 2020.

The C&AG will audit the ERC's 2019 Financial Statement in April 2020.

6. Policies and Terms of Reference

The Senior Management Team terms of reference was approved by the Board.

The proposed changes to the code of conduct for the Board and employees, and the terms of reference of the Audit and Risk committee were also approved.

7. Risk Management (Recurring item) (B-5-19-4)

In light of internal audit recommendations, the Board adopted the inclusion of conflict of interest as a recurring agenda item going forward.

The Board was advised that a critical review of the ERC will be due in 2020 or 2021. This matter is to be clarified with the C&AG.

At its next meeting, the ARC will present a report to the Board on its work in 2019 and will include recommendations from internal audit findings and progress to date.

8. Staffing

The CEO presented the Board with an update on the ongoing business cases for additional staff. CPU is of the opinion that the deputy CEO should be a full time PO rather than designated as an additional post of responsibility to an existing member of staff.

At the request of CPU, the ERC is procuring a consultant to review the IT staffing requirements of the ERC, and will work to submit a proposal for an IT manager and additional administrative staff following guidelines provided by CPU, in Q1 2020.

9. HR

Following human-resources related queries raised by the CEO, discussions took place between the Board and the CEO. AC withdrew from the meeting at this stage.

PT is to issue correspondence to DPER on the matter.

10. AOB

The Board noted a change in the provisional meetings dates for March and May 2020. The Board will meet on 30/03/2020 and 27/05/2020. DB will not be present at the next meeting.

The CEO thanked the Board for its support throughout the year.

There being no further business requiring her presence, JC withdrew from the meeting which concluded shortly after.

Pauline Sheld

Appendix 1

**EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE
Board Meeting
4 December 2019
Agenda**

1. Minutes of meeting of 25 September 2019 (Bmin-5-0919)
2. Matters arising from the minutes
3. Report on developments since previous meeting
4. Governance matters (B-6-19-1)
5. Finance
6. Policies and Terms of Reference (B6-19-2; B-6-19-3 and B-6-19-4)
7. Risk Management (Recurring item)
8. Staffing
9. HR
10. AOB

Appendix 2 Report on developments since previous meeting

ERC Governing Board Meeting December 4, 2019

Project updates

- PISA 2018 – launch Dec 3; EU meeting in Finland week of Dec 9
- DLF evaluation – baseline report on track for publication around Dec 17; fieldwork for longitudinal phase 1 underway
- TIMSS 2019, PIRLS, PISA 2021 – all on track – TIMSS 2019 meeting next week in Agadir to review initial outputs
- PPADE (diagnostic literacy test) in collaboration with NEPS – all on track
- Gaeltacht Recognition Scheme – minor delay of which DES is aware, otherwise on track
- DEIS – two technical papers on new identification submitted to DES, work on NAMER and PISA 2018/DEIS analyses on track
- IJE – 2018/2019 vol to be published Q1 2020; future of IJE to be discussed Q1 2020
- Forthcoming reports 2020 (ERC Research Series)
 - PISA 2018 and DEIS Q2
 - TIMSS 2015 and home background Q1
 - PISA 2015 and home background Q1
 - TIMSS 2015 and attitudes and engagement Q2
 - Further reporting on PISA 2018 (wellbeing, digital technologies, TBC by end 2019)
- FLIP+ steering group – meeting next week in Luxembourg
- DOTS – need to decide on actions prior to Christmas. Procurement of new online system going well.
- PIAAC – going to schedule – next governing board meeting late Jan 2020, Rome; meeting with CSO and DES Dec 5
- Staff appraisal forms being revised, to include improvements to professional development needs and priorities
- Staff training mid-January 2020 – with Hub na NÓg – children's perspectives – drawing on three current ERC projects
- Cross project sample overlap control due to unusually high number of studies in the field – on track but requiring some additional work Q1 2020
- Data management – improvements in progress but requiring some additional work Q1-Q2 2020.

